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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [ELAB](#) [PTER](#) [KU](#)  
SUBJECT: MINISTER AL-HAJJI DISCUSSES COMBATTING TIP,  
REGULATING CHARITIES

REF: A. KUWAIT 4477 (NOTAL)  
[B](#). KUWAIT 3603 (NOTAL)  
[C](#). KUWAIT 3158 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Faisal Al-Hajji briefed Ambassador November 28 on GOK discussions to establish a shelter for domestic workers as part of efforts to combat trafficking in persons (TIP). He highlighted other GOK measures including proposed revisions to the current labor law, the revocation of licenses of noncompliant recruitment agencies and the replacement of underage camel jockeys with robots. Al-Hajji reported that contributions to Islamic charities were "fully supervised and controlled" despite some attempts to circumvent the system during Ramadan. End summary.

Recruitment Agencies to Bear More Responsibility for Domestic  
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[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador met November 28 with Minister of Social Affairs and Labor (MOSAL) Faisal Al-Hajji for an update on GOK actions to combat trafficking in persons (TIP). Al-Hajji reported that the GOK's inter-ministerial committee to address TIP issues discussed establishing a shelter for domestic workers in need. Since the Ministry of Interior (MOI), not the MOSAL, has direct jurisdiction over domestic workers, the Minister telephoned MOI Assistant Undersecretary for Operations, Abdullatif Al-Rujaib, who informed that recruitment agencies ultimately would be responsible to house domestic maids under a new three-party (domestic worker, sponsor and recruitment agency) contract to take effect in January (ref B). The new procedures would require maids to contact the MOI to reconcile labor disputes. The recruitment agency would accommodate the servant until a resolution was reached or the worker was reassigned or repatriated. The employer would pay for the servant's repatriation airfare as part of the new contract's obligations, according to Al-Hajji. (Note: Kuwait Union of Domestic Labor Offices (KUDLO) General Manager, Hashim Maged Mohammed, told PolOff November 8 that KUDLO intends to open four shelters, two by February 2006, to house workers from India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. End note.)

[1](#)3. (C) Ambassador emphasized the need to establish facilities that not only provide workers advice and resources to mediate labor disputes but also houses workers during the resolution process. Al-Hajji added that the MOI would finalize its shelter development plan and discuss it with the inter-ministerial committee, which the MOSAL chairs, and then submit it to the Council of Ministers for approval.

Camel Jockey Ban and Minimum Wage Among MOSAL Accomplishments  
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¶4. (C) Al-Hajji listed the GOK's other anti-TIP measures including submission to the National Assembly of a revised labor law affording non-domestic workers more benefits such as minimum wages and limiting the workweek (ref C). He also addressed MOI efforts to revoke the licenses of recruitment agencies in violation of regulations. (Note: The MOI suspended 163 agencies in the recent past, bringing the total to 465 officially sanctioned offices (ref B). End note.) Al-Hajji cited the replacement of underage camel jockeys with robots, which took effect with the opening of the current racing season in October (ref A), as another anti-TIP accomplishment.

Charities: "Fully Supervised and Controlled"

¶5. (C) The Minister confirmed that contributions to Islamic charitable organizations were now "fully supervised and controlled." Despite some attempts to bypass controls during the donation-heavy month of Ramadan, he reported, the MOSAL intervened to ensure oversight. Al-Hajji offered a meeting between Naser Al-Ammar, Director of MOSAL's Charity and Donation Organization Department, and EmbOffs for a full briefing.

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LeBaron